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**ARGYLE MIDDLE SCHOOL
Theatre Department Handbook
2025-2026**

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Erin and Travis Turek, Directors of AMS Theatre**

Greetings and welcome to the 2025-26 Argyle Theatre Department! We are tremendously excited about the upcoming year.

The Argyle Theatre Department's mission is to instill a deep respect and knowledge of the craft of theatre in its many forms. We strive to challenge the audience with questions that affect their own lives. We are very fortunate to have a school faculty and administration that realizes the importance of cultivating theatre at the middle school level. The chance to produce theatre is a privilege, not a right. Cherish the opportunity and the great power that comes with this privilege.

This handbook contains pertinent information about grading policies, classroom rules and expectations, classroom materials, and more.

Thank you for your interest in the Argyle Theatre Department. We look forward to working with you as we experience what the wide world of theatre has to offer. If you have any questions regarding the following material, please contact us.

All the Best,
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Table of Contents

Contact Information	3
Argyle Middle School Theatre – Class Descriptions	4
Course Syllabi	5-6
Classroom Rules & Expectations	7
Classroom Signals	7
Classroom Supplies	8
Theatre Wish List	8
Discipline Policy	8
Grading Policies	9
Eligibility	9
Argyle Middle School Theatre – Extra-Curricular	9-10
Jr. Thespians	10
Kindness Clause (<i>must be signed & returned; digital or paper</i>)	11

Theatre Class Descriptions

6th Grade Theatre

This is an introductory theatre course. Over the course of the year we will touch briefly on the basics of theatre including building an ensemble, movement & pantomime, using the voice, staging & techniques, and audience etiquette, as well as an intro to technical theatre. This course provides the opportunity for 6th grade students to get a taste of the theatre world.

7th Grade Theatre

This class is an introduction to dramatic performance. Students will explore all areas of theatre arts including basic stage movement, voice, pantomime, improvisation, script writing, performance, theatre history, lip sync, technical theatre, musical theatre, and Readers theatre. Students will also be introduced to duet and monologue based performances.

8th Grade Theatre

This class will require that students work in all areas of theatre arts including basic stage movement, voice, pantomime, improvisation, characterization, audition techniques, sensory theatre, script writing, performance, theatre history, musical theatre, and Readers theatre. Students will perform monologues and duet acting scenes. This class will also include units on Shakespeare and Elizabethan England, as well as influential playwrights throughout history.

Tech Theatre (7/8)

This class will focus on different elements of technical theatre, including various design elements, theatre safety, building and stage construction, lighting, sound, and costuming. In addition to projects done within class, students may have the opportunity to help setup and work various events held on our campus throughout the year.

Course Syllabi

*All syllabi are subject to change at the teacher's discretion.

<p><u>6th Grade - Full Year</u></p> <p>1st Semester Building an ensemble Developing focus Physical inhibition Physical awareness on stage Ensemble work Projection Breath control Articulation Tongue Twisters Body Positions Shadow Scenes Audience etiquette</p>	<p>2nd Semester Intro to Technical Theatre Types of stages Stage Direction Design Concepts Ground Plan/ Perspective Drawings Dream Room Design Stage to Screen Set Design Intro to Lighting Design Creating a Gobo Intro to Sound Design Sound effect creations Foley Art Costume</p>
<p><u>7th Grade - Full Year</u></p> <p>1st Semester Building an ensemble Developing focus Physical Inhibition Origins of theatre Pantomime Script writing Mask making basics Intro to performance Voice Choral reading/ Readers Theatre Tableaux Transitions Diction Articulation Breath Control Review types of stages Stage movement/ blocking Intro to improvisation (improv) Situational & character improvisation Developing a character Active listening Give & take Pulling focus</p>	<p>2nd Semester Intro to Theatre History <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Storytelling ● Greeks ● Romans ● Medieval ● Elizabethan ● Intro to Shakespeare ● Modern theatre Theatre History Museum Project Intro to Musical Theatre History <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Rogers & Hammerstein ● Evolution of Musical Theatre Lip Sync Audition techniques Cold reading Intro to monologues Intro to duet acting scenes</p>

8th Grade - Full Year

1st Semester

Building an ensemble
 Developing focus
 Imagination/ concentration
 Physical Inhibition
 Origins of theatre
 Pantomime
 Sensory awareness
 Advanced speech/ voice
 Styles of acting
 Advanced monologue work
Every Little Step
 Advanced character study
 Audition Workshop
 Creating a Resume
 Theatre genres/ styles
 Radio Dramas
 Foley Art
 Producing a play
 Stage movement/ blocking
 Roles & responsibilities
 Techniques for memorization
 Directing
 Stage Management
 Performance

2nd Semester

Influential playwrights
 Who's Who in the Theatre World
 Advanced Theatre History
 Theatrical vocabulary
 Interpreting themes
 The Globe
 William Shakespeare
Romeo & Juliet
Hamlet
 Advanced script writing
 Interpret humor/ wit
 Artistic discipline
 Genres of Musical Theatre
Phantom of the Opera
Love Never Dies
 Yoga Unit (BYOM)
 Transition to High School Theatre

Tech Theatre - Full Year

1st Semester

The Stage Space/ Tech 101
 Lighting
 Theatre Construction and Safety
 Sound Elements and Design
 Costume Design

2nd Semester

Design Ideas and Elements
 Set Design Project
 Design Challenges
 Musical Design

Classroom Rules and Expectations

The following have been set into place to create a safe and comfortable learning environment. Failure to adhere to the classroom rules and expectations will affect your class grade (as positive participation is a huge component in theatre), and lead to disciplinary action. Here are the 5 BP's that we will adhere to, in addition to a few others regarding the space/ school in general:

- **Be Punctual** (on time every day)
- **Be Prepared** (with supplies & remember to take your things with you)
- **Be Polite** (not talking or disrupting presentations/ performances)
- **Be Productive** (participation is NOT an option; never say "I can't", etc.)
- **Be Positive** (see Kindness Clause)
- No horseplay and/or running around the classrooms/ stage/ shop/ etc.
- No gum, food, candy, or drinks – unless w/ teacher permission
- Cell phones **MUST** be in backpacks/bags & smart watches on airplane mode (this is a **school policy**)

Classroom Signals

This art form requires constant movement and energy, thus oftentimes creating a loud environment. The following signals have been set in place in order to re-direct and command attention.

1. Callback! We are going to implement theatrical callbacks this year
 - a. Ex: - "You have 5 minutes remaining" *Response* "Thank you 5!"
2. "Freeze" - stop everything (movement/ talking/ etc.) and listen

****Basic rule of thumb - be ready to give us your attention at any moment****

Classroom Supplies

Each student will need to have the following items for class every day:

1. 1 spiral or composition notebook
2. Pen and or pencil
3. District Chromebook (needs to be charged)

There will be projects from time to time that may require additional supplies

Discipline Policy

As a student and/or participant in the Argyle Theatre Department, you are expected to conduct yourself with maturity and poise. Good behavior and model citizenship should be synonymous with the Argyle Theatre. We hope that these behaviors will be commonplace this year; however, should a student break a classroom rule, the following procedure may be implemented:

1st Offense – Warning

2nd Offense – Parent Contact

3rd Offense – Parent Conference/ Detention

4th Offense – Office Referral (could occur immediately if the situation warrants)

Grading Policy

50% - Major (ex: performances, final scripts, written tests, projects)

50% - Minor (ex: quizzes, acting journal portfolio, daily written assignments, participation)

Eligibility

According to University Interscholastic League (UIL) rules and House Bill 72 (No Pass/ No Play), a student must stay academically eligible in order to participate in an extracurricular activity.

Eligibility does not affect classroom work and rehearsal conducted during the school day. Extra-curricular activities are directly affected. Academic standing will be taken into account in casting productions, as well as may be cause for dismissal if a company member is unable to maintain passing grades.

Argyle Middle School Theatre Department – Extra-Curricular

This year AMS will perform two main stage productions. Below you will find some basic information, but for additional information, including character descriptions and audition requirements, please visit the Theatre Department website for more information.

Jr. Thespians

Junior Thespian Troupe #88845 is an active troupe in the International Thespian Society. ITS is an association of theatre educators and schools whose focus is on maintaining a theatre learning community where talent and art are shared, new skills are learned, and the whole of theatre is explored. This is a student lead organization in which membership is earned through a point system. This society is open to anyone on our campus who is interested.

Theatre Kindness Clause

Please read the following clause that will be implemented in the SGC and AMS Theatre Department. This page needs to be printed & signed (by both student and parent/guardian) and turned in for our records by this Friday, August 22nd. If you are unable to print, or if you'd prefer, you can click the hyperlink below (**Kindness Clause Acknowledgement**) and fill out the document electronically.

Kindness Clause 2025-26

It is imperative that all students in the SGC and AMS Theatre Department are conducting themselves in a positive manner and show kindness to others. Kindness is a choice, and as we are creating an inclusive and welcoming environment where students should be able to feel safe while being vulnerable, it is imperative that everyone adheres to this policy. This includes, but it is not limited to in person and all online communication (including social media). If these ideals cannot be upheld, please understand that this could be grounds for removal from a classroom setting, production, or Thespian Troupe. Remember that in a world where you can be anything, be kind.

SGC Kindness Clause

Please return this page and acknowledgement by Friday, August 22nd.

_____ I have read and agree to the terms of the Kindness Clause above.

_____ I understand that my failure to adhere to this will have consequences.

Student Name

Student Signature

Parent/Guardian Name

Parent/ Guardian Signature